

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1426

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

UNCLAS PRETORIA 5558

USIA FOR IOP/M; IAA

GENEVA FOR WISNER

SUMMARY: REMARKS, TRAVELS AND PRESS CONFERENCE OF CONGRESSMAN DIGGS WIDELY REPORTED IN RSA MEDIA. THROUGH THERE SEEMS TO BE INTENTION OF DOWN PLAY IMPORTANCE OF HIS UTTERANCES. COVERAGE IN BOTH AFRIKAANS AND ENGLISH PRESS APPEARED IN INNER PAGE OF NEWSPAPER RATHER THAN FRONT PAGE. MEDIA GAVE HEAVY PLAY TO MULDER REJECTION OF DIGGS ACCUSATIONS CONCERNING MINISTRY DISTORTION OF STATISTICS IN AFTERMATH OF SOWETO RIOTS IN STATEMENT THAT RSA WILL NOT BE DICTATED TO REGARDING ITS INTERNAL POLICIES.

1. JOHANNESBURG LIBERAL "RAND DAILY MAIL" AND THE "STAR" OF NOVEMBER 3 REPORTED DIGGS MONDAY PRESS CONFERENCE AND MADE FOLLOWING POINTS: THAT SAG DIDN'T REALIZE MEANING OF US ELECTION; THAT MANY IN RSA SAW NEED FOR CHANGE, THEY WERE BASICALLY POWERLESS;
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THAT MINISTRY OF INFORMATION HAD MISINFORMED PEOPLE

ABOUT ACTUAL CASUALTY RATES AFTER SOWETO; THAT US BUSINESS HAD TO THINK OF MORE THAN PROFITS WHILE OPERATING IN RSA; THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN RSA SINCE PREVIOUS TRIP. HEAVY PLAY GIVEN TO MINISTER MULDER'S REJECTION OF DIGGS ACCUSATION AND STATEMENTS THAT RSA WILL NOT BE DICTATED TO ABOUT ITS INTERNAL POLICIES.

2. UNDER TITLE "GALLERY SHOW""DURBAN DAILY NEWS" OF DECEMBER 1 EDITORIALIZED: "CHARLES DIGGS AND DICK CLARK ARE AMONG THE LEAST POPULAR GUESTS IN SOME TIME." "THEY ACCEPTED RSA HOSPITALITY AND THEN TRIED TO LAY DOWN THE LAW TELLING US HOW CARTER IS GOING TO FIX US." EDITORIAL SAID RSA CAN RULE OUT ANY MORAL OR MILITARY AID FROM AMERICA, FOUND IT "HEARTENING" THAT TWO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WERE ALLOWED TO VISIT RSA WITH FREE ACCESS TO BLACK LEADERS.

3. SABC RADIO NEWS DECEMBER 2 REPORTED DIGGS STATEMENT IN WINDHOEK THAT RSA HOLDS THE SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA; THAT TURNHALLE CONFERENCE SHOULD INCLUDE DELEGATIONS FROM RSA AND SWAPO; SWAPO IS NOT COMMUNISM; THERE IS NO TRULY COMMUNIST STATE IN AFRICA."

4. "RAND DAILY MAIL" OF DECEMBER 2 REPORTED FROM WINDHOEK THAT DIGGS "WILL RECOMMEND THAT AMERICAN PRESIDENT-ELECT ADOPT TOUGHER LINES AGAINST RSA ON SWA ISSUE." DIGGS REPORTEDLY SAID HE WAS CONVINCED THAT KISSINGER-VORSTER DEAL INCLUDED US CONCESSIONS TO RSA.

5. CAPE TOWN AFRIKAANS "DIE BURGER" OF DECEMBER 3 QUOTED DIGGS FROM WINDHOEK SAYING CUBAN ARMY IN ANGOLA IS NOT PERMANENT ARMY OF OCCUPATION BUT SIMPLY IS FILLING A VACUUM LEFT BY THE PORTUGUESE. ARTICLE SAID DIGGS BELIEVES "WHAT IS NECESSARY TO FORCE CHANGE IN RSA IS STRONG ACTION FROM INSIDE AND OUTSIDE."

6. EDITORIAL CARTOON IN JOHANNESBURG AFRIKAANS UNCLASSIFIED

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ZBEELD" DECEMBER 2 SHOWED PM VORSTER AS SCHOOL TEACHER POINTING TO LIST OF CHANGES IN RSA, WRITTEN ON BLACKBOARD LIST INCLUDES TRANSKEI INDEPENDENCE, HOME OWNERSHIP RIGHTS FOR BLACKS, NARROWED WAGE GAP, OPEN HOTELS, ETC. DIGGS IS PORTRAYED COVERING EYES WITH HIM AND SAYING HE SEES NO CHANGES. VORSTER TELLS HIM TO TAKE OFF HIS BLINKERS AND SEE REALITIES.

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